

discharged through a discharge chamber 205. Air flowing into discharge chamber 205 is illustrated using arrows 209 in figure 14.

Applicant's invention as recited in claim 1 is a security unit comprising a secure, lockable housing including an inlet (16) for items to be stored. A gas feed mechanism (8) is provided for conveying items introduced into the inlet (16) of the housing. A removable package (7) is provided within the housing. The removable package (7) includes an inlet (62) through which items conveyed by the gas feed mechanism (8) are introduced and a gas outlet (62) through which gas entering the removable package (7) can escape. The security unit is arranged so that the inlet (62) of the removable package (7) is sealed in a tamper evident manner before the removable package (7) can be removed from the housing.

Unlike Gomez, Applicant's claimed invention includes a removable package having an inlet that is sealed in a tamper evident manner before the removable package can be removed from the housing. This arrangement allows the contents of the removable package to be removed from the security unit as a discrete group. Because the removable package is sealed in a tamper evident manner before it is removed, the integrity of the package contents is ensured.

Because Gomez does not disclose a removable package having an inlet that is sealed in a tamper evident manner before it can be removed, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is presently in condition for allowance. Claims 2-26 depend from claim 1 and recite additional limitations; Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are in condition for allowance and courteously requests prompt notice of the same. If a telephone conference would be of assistance, please contact the undersigned practitioner at 612/347-7000.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 3-FEB-2003



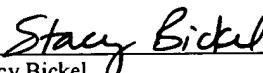
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